

Washington, DC - Congressman John Barrow (GA-12) today released a radio address on the immediate threat of H1N1 this flu season and what we can all do to curb its spread.

Barrow's address is being released the week after a House Energy and Commerce hearing titled, "Preparing for the 2009 Pandemic Flu," at which Secretary of Health and Human Services Kathleen Sebelius updated members of Congress on the status of the virus and shared simple steps folks can take to keep themselves safe.

"Although evidence to date shows that the virus has fortunately not changed to become more deadly...we need to monitor the impact of the 2009 H1N1 and the seasonal flu throughout the next several months," said Sebelius. "The virus is infecting more people than we typically see with seasonal flu, including children, younger adults, and pregnant women. Slowing the spread of the virus is a responsibility shared by all of us, and there are some simple steps we can take such as hand washing, covering coughs and sneezes, and staying home when you're sick."

In his radio address, Barrow urges folks to take these precautions to prevent the spread of the H1N1 and stresses that children are at especially higher risk. Parents and teachers need to be especially vigilant this back-to-school season.

"When all of our kids are at school together, they're at risk," said Barrow. "One kid's infection can easily become everyone's infection. While we all need to be cautious, I urge folks to teach their kids to take the proper steps to minimize their chances of getting sick. I hope our radio stations will play this message so that Georgia families will be reminded of what they can do to help fight the spread of H1N1."

For the most up-to-date information about the H1N1 and seasonal flu, visit www.flu.gov, or visit Congressman Barrow's website, www.barrow.house.gov.

The full text of Congressman Barrow's radio address:

Hey, this is Congressman John Barrow.

This flu season, we've got a new threat-the H1N1 flu.

Anyone can get H1N1, but children and young adults are at higher risk.

The symptoms of H1N1 are same as regular flu - cough, runny nose, fever, fatigue - and it's spread the same way - getting coughed or sneezed on, or when the virus gets on your hands and you rub your eyes or nose. This back-to-school season, we need to do what we can to stop the spread.

Always wash your hands with warm water and soap, and use the paper towel to turn off the faucet. Or use hand sanitizer. Cover your mouth and nose when you sneeze or cough, and teach your kids to do the same. If you feel sick, or your kids feel sick, stay home. Get a seasonal flu shot, and - when it becomes available in October - the H1N1 shot.

It's up to all of us to do our part to keep our families healthy. For more information, visit my website at barrow.house.gov.

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